

## CITATION FOR TONYA McCUSKER AM – Honour Awards 2017

In 2009 Tonya McCusker, together with her husband Malcolm McCusker QC, made an 'out of the blue' proactive approach to the Sphinx Foundation Inc. offering in a general way to become involved with the then embryonic Sphinx Scholarship Fund appeal. There were two principal outcomes which proved to be the turning point in the evolution of the Fund – firstly a donation of \$50,000 from the Trustees of the McCusker Charitable Foundation to underwrite in perpetuity the very first endowed entry-level scholarship as well as funding towards bursaries; and secondly an offer to host an official launch event for the Appeal at their family home. The Fund would not be where it is today without that magnificence help.

Tonya and Malcolm have continued to provide support in various ways not only to the Sphinx Scholarship Fund appeal, but to the refurbishment of the old library (now called the McCusker Room), also to the sports and recreation centre (now called the Tyler-McCusker Sports Centre), and by making a substantial pledge towards the 'Raise the Roof' appeal for the proposed PMS multi-purpose performance facility.

In January 2017 when the then State Labor Opposition announced completely unexpectedly a policy to repurpose PMS as a local intake secondary school and to relocate the Gifted and Talented program to a new CBD high rise school to be called 'Education Central', Tonya provided massive encouragement to many others who were putting their best efforts into the successful campaign to reverse this policy, and her impact cannot be overestimated. This personal commitment was most notable in that Tonya was not then officially a Modernian.

In 2011, Tonya and Malcolm jointly approached Hon Michael Kirby to present an oration to senior students and guests in October 2011 in conjunction with the Commonwealth Heads of Government conference. This event was so successful that that it led to the formation of the annual Perth Modernian Society Oration.

In a different sphere, Tonya has applied considerable efforts to promote philanthropy, and this campaign made a conspicuous impact in promoting this important cause and in particular in spreading the philanthropy message to a younger audience – e.g. Kids Who Give WA – a program aimed at encouraging children, 12 years and under, to research a charity or cause, and to develop a 'giving project' to support that organization in need.

Tonya has been awarded Membership of the Order of Australia for significant service to the community of Western Australia through charitable and philanthropic roles, and to children and young people.

Tonya has consistently led by example and in that way has produced a large multiplier effect."